

Fabian von Schlabrendorff's Courage

To the Editor:

The New York Times carried the news of Fabian von Schlabrendorff's death in Germany last week [obituary Sept. 5] and in doing so it did honor to the memory of this outstanding hero of the German resistance to Hitler.

Gen. Lucius Clay, Allen Dulles and other Americans who knew many figures in the war and prewar period in Germany were aware of the extraordinary record of Schlabrendorff's courage and persistence in his antagonism to the Nazi regime. I have the feeling that the real significance of this man's unbelievable courage, suffering and unrelenting opposition to the Nazi forces, which so long and so disastrously ruled Germany, should receive greater recognition than any passing account of his death and career can convey.

The late President Heuss of the Federal Republic once called the record of stark courage of the men and women who constituted the *Widerstand* to Hitler as "the gift to Germany's future." I believe that Schlabrendorff's record could well epitomize that courage.

He seems to have led a charmed life in the narrow escapes he had from death.

The Times's article accurately describes his attempt to kill Hitler with bombs disguised as wine bottles he placed on the plane carrying the Führer from his East Prussian headquarters to Berlin. On another occasion, he was on the point of being actually sentenced to death in the Peoples Court when some of our bombs fell on the court, killing the notorious presiding judge but missing the prisoner. Later he was being led to his death in southern Germany when one of our patrols intercepted the squad, and again his life was saved.

It was said of him he was one of the most tortured men the Gestapo ever held, and he carried scars of this abuse to his grave.

The Federal Republic recognized Schlabrendorff's quality when, as a lawyer and man of high intelligence and principles, he was appointed to the High Constitutional Court of his country, from which he retired a few years ago.

He was not alone among the heroes and heroines of the resistance, but he was among the bravest of the brave.

JOHN J. MCCLOY

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The writer was U.S. High Commissioner for Germany from 1949 to 1952.